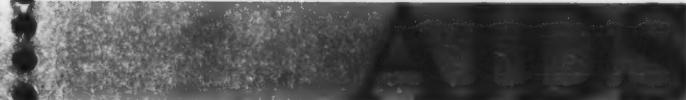




YOUTH &



AIDS

STUDY

New Brunswick Report



Queen's University at Kingston

Department of Health and Community Services- March 9, 1989 1.00 pm

The "Canada Youth and Aids Study, New Brunswick Report" shows that New Brunswick youth know as much about Acquired Immuno-deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and less about other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) than their counterparts across Canada.

The study, conducted by Queen's University with funding provided by the Federal Department of Health and Welfare, assessed the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of young people by surveying more than 38,000 young people in Grades 7, 9 and 11 and first year college and university students.

Compared with their counterparts across Canada, New Brunswick youth:

- *expressed similar attitudes toward people with AIDS and HIV infection;**
- *had received less information about AIDS from school and more from television;**
- *had received less information about STDs from school and more from family;**
- *were less likely, at the Grade 11 level, to view homosexuality as wrong;**
- *were similarly approving of premarital sex;**
- *were more likely to be embarrassed to buy condoms;**
- *were more sexually active; and**
- *had received less information about sex from school and more from friends and television.**

The report, its findings and implications will be closely studied by Department of Health and Community Services officials over the next several weeks with a view towards reviewing and increasing public health education.

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**CANADA YOUTH
AND AIDS STUDY**

New Brunswick Report

Errata Sheet #2

On page 3, the first item under **Knowledge of AIDS and other STDs** should read as follows with the circled number being the only change:

- The average percentages of correct responses to the AIDS knowledge items by each responding group were as follows: Grade 7 (Secondary I), 68 percent; Grade 9 (Secondary III), 78 percent; Grade 11 (Secondary V), (67) percent; dropouts, 77 percent; and college/university, 72 percent.

CANADA YOUTH AND AIDS STUDY

New Brunswick Report

ERRATA: Please change the two encircled numbers

Table 12

Hours of Class Time Spent by Youth Learning About AIDS
over the Past Two School Years

Hours		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
0	New Brunswick	45%	41	31
	Canada	39	22	27
	Range	24--54	12--41	17--46
1-2	New Brunswick	31	32	36
	Canada	32	29	31
	Range	23--41	22--44	21--51
3-4	New Brunswick	9	9	15
	Canada	10	15	14
	Range	6--12	9--19	9--23
5 or more	New Brunswick	15	18	19
	Canada	19	34	28
	Range	11--27	12--43	13--39

Table 17

Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About People Who Have the AIDS Virus

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
People who have the AIDS virus should be allowed to				
. attend regular school classes.	New Brunswick	57%	58	60
	Canada	59	58	55
	Range	54--67	53--66	49--65
. serve the public as waiters, chefs and hair stylists.	New Brunswick	33	35	28
	Canada	36	35	25
	Range	29--42	30--39	20--33
. work in hospitals.	New Brunswick	13	10	11
	Canada	14	12	11
	Range	10--17	9--18	8--14



PREFACE

This study was undertaken to stimulate the improvement and development of educational and social programs designed to prevent the spread of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among adolescents. The study was funded by the National Health Research and Development Program (NHRDP) of Health and Welfare Canada. It was conducted in collaboration with the Federal Centre for AIDS and members of the Expert Interdisciplinary Advisory Committee on Sexually Transmitted Disease in Children and Youth.

The study's findings are presented in several documents. The national findings are presented in a report entitled, **Canada Youth and AIDS Study**. Details about the research design will be contained in the **Canada Youth and AIDS Study: Technical Report** which will be available in July 1989. Detailed findings about street youth will be a separate report, **Street Youth and AIDS**, which will be available in June 1989. Finally, the New Brunswick findings are presented in this report for distribution to study participants and key individuals and organizations within the province.

The New Brunswick report was prepared by Richard Beazley in collaboration with Alan King and Wendy Warren. It expands the findings that were presented in the **Canada Youth and AIDS Study** report (A.J.C. King, R.P. Beazley, W.K. Warren, C.A. Hankins, A.S. Robertson and J.L. Radford, 1988).

Without the dedicated efforts of the **Canada Youth and AIDS Study's** New Brunswick Coordinator, Dr. Barry Miller, and the cooperation of many institutions, organizations, parents and youth, it would have been impossible to collect data on these especially sensitive topics within

the very tight time constraints under which we worked. The research team is grateful for their efforts.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PART I: INTRODUCTION	1
A. Purpose of the Study	1
B. Sample	1
C. Instruments	2
D. National Findings	3
PART II: NEW BRUNSWICK FINDINGS	5
A. Characteristics of New Brunswick Youth	7
1. Relationship with parents	7
2. View of self and friends	8
3. Alcohol, cigarettes and cannabis use	11
B. Knowledge of AIDS	13
1. Accuracy of AIDS knowledge	13
2. Sources of AIDS information	14
3. Attitudes toward sources of AIDS information	16
C. Knowledge of STDs	17
1. Accuracy of STD knowledge	17
2. Sources of STD information	19
D. Attitudes	20
1. People who have the AIDS virus	20
2. Homosexuality	21
3. Condoms	22
4. Sexual permissiveness	22
E. Sexual Activity	22
1. Frequency of sexual activity	23
2. Number of sexual partners	25
3. Sources of information about sex and birth control	26
F. Summary	28
PART III: IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY	29

FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURE	Page
1 Ages of Respondents	6
TABLES	
1 Number of Respondents	2
2 Youth Who Live with Both Parents	7
3 Youth Agreeing with Selected Items from the Relationship-with-Parents Scale	8
4 Youth Agreeing with Selected Items from the Mental Health Scale	9
5 Youth Agreeing with Selected Items from the Relationship-with-Peers Scale	10
6 Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About Pressure from Friends	11
7 Frequency of Alcohol Consumption by Youth	12
8 Youth Who Have Three or More Drinks of Alcohol at One Time	12
9 Percentage of AIDS Knowledge Items to Which Youth Responded Correctly	13
10 Youth Responding Correctly to Selected AIDS Knowledge Items	14
11 Youth's Main Sources of Information About AIDS	15
12 Hours of Class Time Spent by Youth Learning About AIDS over the Past Two School Years	16
13 Youth Agreeing with Items About Selected Sources of AIDS Information	17
14 Percentage of STD Knowledge Items to Which Youth Responded Correctly	18
15 Youth Responding Correctly to Selected STD Knowledge Items	18
16 Youth's Main Sources of Information About STDs	19
17 Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About People Who Have the AIDS Virus	21

FIGURES AND TABLES (cont'd)

	Page
TABLES (cont'd)	
18 Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About Homosexuality	21
19 Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About Condoms	22
20 Frequency of Grade 9 Youth's Sexual Activity	24
21 Frequency of Grade 11 Youth's Sexual Activity	25
22 Number of Partners with Whom Youth Have Had Sexual Intercourse	26
23 Youth's Main Sources of Information About Sex	27



PART I

INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of the Study

The **Canada Youth and AIDS Study** was designed to assess the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of Canadian youth with respect to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). While the search continues for a cure for AIDS and a vaccine to prevent human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, education is considered to be the primary strategy to prevent the spread of this disease. We hope the study's findings will be of value to those who formulate policy and develop and implement educational and social programs designed to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents.

In the following sections we describe the national sample and survey instruments and summarize the national findings. Part II begins with guidelines for interpreting the New Brunswick findings. Then, we present those findings, including the characteristics of Grade 7s, 9s and 11s; their knowledge of AIDS and other STDs and their sources of information about these diseases; their attitudes toward people with AIDS or HIV infection, and toward homosexuality, condoms and sexual permissiveness; and their sexual behaviours. The report concludes in Part III with general statements about the implications of the national findings.

B. Sample

To obtain a cross-sectional perspective of the development of adolescents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to AIDS and other STDs, we surveyed 38,002 young people in Grades 7, 9 and 11 and first year college and university students. Also included in the target groups were those who had recently dropped out of secondary school, and youth who spent most of their time on the streets of large cities (Table 1).

Table 1
Number of Respondents

	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11	College/ University	Dropouts	Street Youth
New Brunswick	1,054	1,043	1,125	*	*	*
Canada	9,925	9,860	9,617	6,911	1,033	656

*Sampling was done to permit national, not provincial territorial analyses.

The young people surveyed ranged in age from 11 to 21 years. Samples in elementary and secondary school were selected to be representative of the provinces territories. The samples of dropouts, college university students and street youth were selected only to provide a national picture.

To understand the extent to which the responses from our national sample represent the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of Canadian youth, it may be helpful to view possible sampling errors in the following way. If ten samples were drawn in the same fashion, nine of them should produce responses that lie within plus or minus four percent of the percentages we obtained from our national sample.

C. Instruments

Each of the six survey instruments contains questions about respondents' background (age, gender, living arrangements); main and preferred sources of information about sex, birth control, AIDS and other STDs; behaviours (use of alcohol, cigarettes, and cannabis and sexual activity); and knowledge about AIDS and other STDs. Attitudinal items were designed to form scales on relationship with parents, self-esteem, mental health, relationship with peers, people who have AIDS or HIV infection and homosexuality. The AIDS and other STD knowledge items were developed in collaboration with advisors considered to be knowledgeable about these diseases

and with assistance from the Federal Centre for AIDS and members of the Expert Interdisciplinary Advisory Committee on Sexually Transmitted Disease in Children and Youth.

D. National Findings

A summary of the national findings that do not appear in the main text of this report is presented below.

Knowledge of AIDS and other STDs

- The average percentages of correct responses to the AIDS knowledge items by each responding group were as follows: Grade 7 (Secondary I), 68 percent; Grade 9 (Secondary III), 78 percent; Grade 11 (Secondary V), 69 percent; dropouts, 77 percent; and college university, 72 percent.
- The average percentages of correct responses to the other STDs knowledge items by each responding group were as follows: Grade 7 (Secondary I), 42 percent; Grade 9 (Secondary III), 52 percent; Grade 11 (Secondary V), 55 percent; dropouts, 70 percent; and college university, 63 percent.
- Over 70 percent of youth (more females than males) wanted a lot more information about AIDS.

Attitudes

- Young people with negative views about homosexuals also were more likely to have negative views toward people with AIDS and HIV infection.
- Seventy-five percent of dropouts and college university students viewed premarital sex as acceptable between two people who are in love.
- Less than 15 percent of dropouts and college university students said that fear of AIDS was preventing them from having sexual intercourse.

Sexual activity

- Over 75 percent of college university students and dropouts had had sexual intercourse at least once, and about one-half of them had often had sexual intercourse.
- Over 65 percent of college university students and dropouts had engaged in oral sex at least once.

- About 15 percent of college university students and dropouts had had anal intercourse at least once.
- Youth who were more sexually active were also more likely to have frequently drunk alcohol, used cannabis and smoked cigarettes.

Protection

- Pregnancy was the most worrisome outcome of having sexual intercourse for Grade 11 (Secondary V), college/university and dropout respondents.
- Less than 20 percent of dropouts or college university students reported always using a condom during sexual intercourse.

Gender differences

- Significantly more males than females at all age levels held negative attitudes toward homosexuals and people with AIDS or HIV infection.
- Males and females were equally knowledgeable about AIDS and other STDs.
- More males than females were sexually active, except for college university students where the percentages of sexually active males and females were nearly even.

Use of drugs

- Fifty-nine percent of college university students and 61 percent of dropouts reported drinking at least once a week.
- Fifty-seven percent of college/university students and 69 percent of dropouts who drank reported having three or more drinks at one time.
- Dropouts were significantly more likely than any other group to have had more than five drinks at one time; they were also much more likely to have smoked cigarettes and used cannabis.

PART II

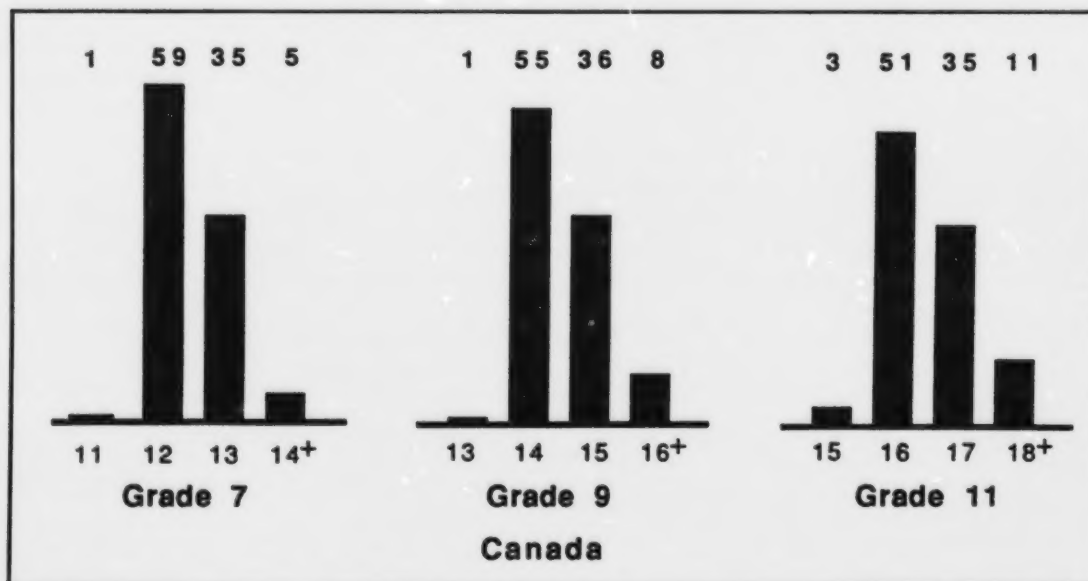
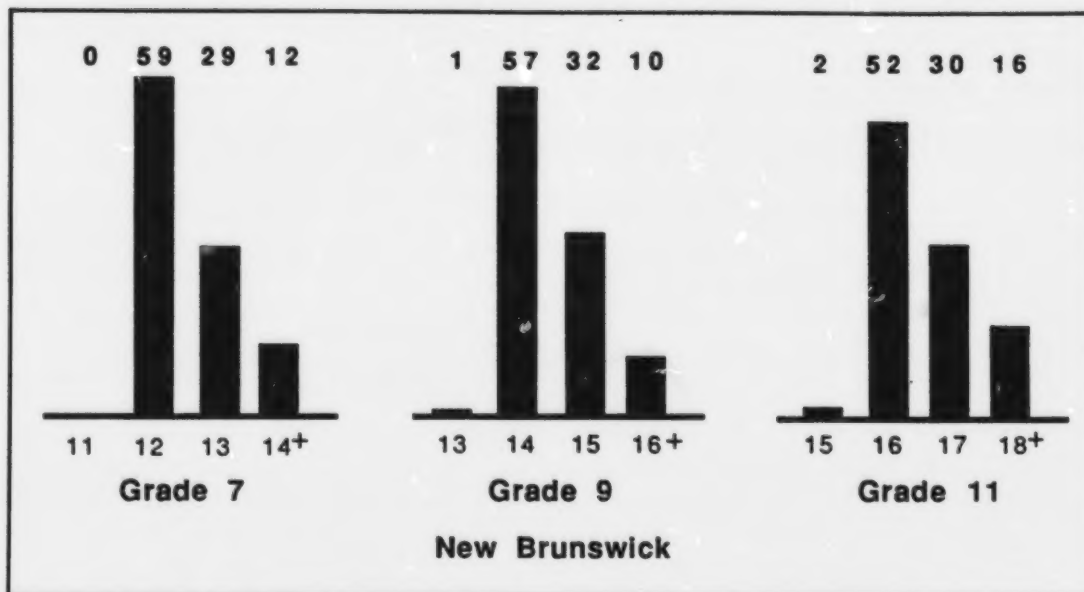
NEW BRUNSWICK FINDINGS

The principal findings for New Brunswick youth who were in Grades 7, 9 and 11 are presented in the tables and the discussion that make up the remainder of this part of the report. In each table, the New Brunswick student responses are reported, followed by the national results and the range of provincial territorial responses; that is, the lowest result of any province/territory and the highest result. Because of rounding, the cumulative percentages in some tables are 99 or 101 rather than 100 percent.

New Brunswick youth were similar in age to their Canadian counterparts on average; however, more of the province's Grade 7s were 14 years old and more of the Grade 11s were 18 years old (Figure 1). Interpreters of these findings should keep in mind the slightly higher proportions of older students in Grades 7 and 11 in New Brunswick compared with students in the same grades in Canada generally; even a slight difference may influence the behaviours and attitudes of youth.

In analyzing the New Brunswick findings, a simple rule of thumb can be useful when making comparisons with the national findings and with those of other provinces/territories: a difference of five percent between two measures is usually statistically significant at the 95 percent level of confidence. We comment on the significant differences, but judgements on the practical importance of these differences are left to those in New Brunswick who will act on the findings. We have attempted to select the most relevant information for presentation in this report, recognizing the impossibility of reporting all of the findings.

Figure 1
Ages of Respondents



A. Characteristics of New Brunswick Youth

In this section we compare characteristics of young people in New Brunswick with those of Canadian youth generally. We describe how youth view their relationships with their parents and friends. In addition, we examine their views of themselves and their use of alcohol, cigarettes and cannabis.

1. Relationship with parents

Over three-quarters of Grade 7, 9 and 11 students in New Brunswick and in Canada lived with both their parents, but more Grade 9s in New Brunswick than in Canada had that living arrangement (Table 2). There was a substantial difference in the percentages of young people who lived with both parents from one province territory to another.

Table 2
Youth Who Live with Both Parents

	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
New Brunswick	76%	80	79
Canada	77	75	75
Range*	66--85	57--85	61--86

*Range = lowest percentage for any province/territory--highest percentage for any province territory.

Similarly, there were notable differences by province territory among the percentages of youth agreeing with items pertaining to their relationship with parents (Table 3). Generally speaking, the majority of Canadian youth, including those in New Brunswick, had a positive relationship with their parents. More New Brunswick Grade 9s had positive views about their relationship with parents than did Canadian Grade 9s generally.

Table 3

Youth Agreeing with Selected Items from the Relationship-with-Parents Scale

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
My parent(s) understand me.	New Brunswick	70%	61	57
	Canada	70	58	58
	Range	60--74	50--64	52--66
I ask my parent(s) for advice on serious matters.	New Brunswick	59	54	54
	Canada	59	49	51
	Range	46--67	34--60	39--64
There are times when I would like to leave home.	New Brunswick	48	46	53
	Canada	46	48	56
	Range	34--57	43--58	46--72
What my parent(s) think of me is important.	New Brunswick	84	84	88
	Canada	87	80	86
	Range	76--89	75--87	85--92
I would raise my children differently from the way I was raised.	New Brunswick	32	30	31
	Canada	31	36	35
	Range	25--44	28--47	25--42
I have a happy home life.	New Brunswick	79	80	77
	Canada	80	76	75
	Range	68--82	70--83	66--82

2. View of self and friends

Our measure of self-esteem was designed to see how students judge themselves on seven items about self-confidence, ease of making decisions, regrets for past actions and appearance. Canadian youth generally had high self-regard (for example, more than 80% liked and had confidence in themselves). In comparison with their Canadian counterparts, more New Brunswick youth reported having trouble making decisions (Grade 9, 31 compared with 24% and Grade 11, 35 compared with 27%) and often felt sorry for things they did (Grade 7, 68 compared with 63%; Grade 9, 65 compared with 54% and Grade 11, 64 compared with 49%).

Canadian youth overall exhibited positive indications of mental health. On selected mental health items (Table 4), the proportion of young people in New Brunswick responding positively was similar to that of young Canadians on average. Fewer New Brunswick Grade 9s said they sometimes had thought about committing suicide, but on the other hand, fewer of the province's Grade 7s and 11s viewed the future optimistically.

Table 4
Youth Agreeing with Selected Items from the Mental Health Scale

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
I am a happy person.	New Brunswick	80%	84	83
	Canada	81	84	84
	Range	66--85	79--87	79--88
I often feel depressed.	New Brunswick	32	32	36
	Canada	31	34	32
	Range	28--36	32--40	30--37
I often cannot sleep worrying about things.	New Brunswick	38	38	42
	Canada	41	38	41
	Range	32--47	32--43	33--48
I sometimes have thoughts about committing suicide.	New Brunswick	23	22	26
	Canada	23	27	26
	Range	17--33	22--36	24--37
The future looks good to me.	New Brunswick	68	72	66
	Canada	73	74	71
	Range	62--77	66--77	66--74

Like other Canadian youth, most of those in New Brunswick had a lot of friends with whom they talked about problems. Compared with the national percentages, more New Brunswick Grade 9s felt they did not have much in common with people their age, and more of the Grade 11s often had friends ask them for help and advice (Table 5).

Table 5
Youth Agreeing with Selected Items from the Relationship-with-Peers Scale

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
I have a lot of friends.	New Brunswick	86%	89	90
	Canada	84	86	89
	Range	78--86	79--89	87--92
If I have a problem, I usually keep it to myself.	New Brunswick	38	34	38
	Canada	35	35	42
	Range	28--43	30--42	34--52
People of the opposite sex seem to like me.	New Brunswick	52	65	72
	Canada	51	62	73
	Range	40--55	55--68	66--78
My friends often ask me for help and advice.	New Brunswick	61	74	77
	Canada	63	76	72
	Range	50--66	68--81	68--77
I do not have much in common with people of my age.	New Brunswick	29	19	15
	Canada	26	14	16
	Range	18--32	11--25	13--18

Few young people, regardless of age, acknowledged feeling pressure from their friends to drink alcohol and be sexually active (Table 6).

Table 6

Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About Pressure from Friends

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
I feel pressure from my friends to drink alcohol.	New Brunswick	10%	13	14
	Canada	11	15	13
	Range	5--22	6--25	7--20
I feel pressure from my friends to be sexually active.	New Brunswick	*	13	10
	Canada	*	12	13
	Range	*	8--15	8--19

*The Grade 7 questionnaire did not include this item.

3. Alcohol, cigarettes and cannabis use

As would be expected, more of the older than younger adolescents surveyed consumed alcoholic beverages, and more of the older ones who drank, drank more frequently. New Brunswick youth differed from Canadian youth generally in the proportion who drank alcohol and the frequency with which they drank. In New Brunswick, compared to Canada generally, more Grade 7 and 9 students never drank alcohol and in all grades those who did drink, did so less often (Table 7). On the other hand, when New Brunswick Grade 11s drank, they were more likely than their Canadian counterparts to have had three or more drinks of alcohol at one time (Table 8).

Table 7
Frequency of Alcohol Consumption by Youth

Grade		Never	About Once a Month	About Once a Week	At Least 2-3 Times a Week
7	New Brunswick	60%	35	4	1
	Canada	54	40	4	1
	Range	47--61	33--46	3--7	1--2
9	New Brunswick	32	52	14	2
	Canada	24	51	22	4
	Range	17--39	44--56	14--25	1--5
11	New Brunswick	15	54	27	4
	Canada	13	43	35	9
	Range	8--18	33--54	26--45	4--14

Table 8
**Youth Who Have Three or More Drinks
of Alcohol at One Time**

	Grade 9	Grade 11
New Brunswick	55%	74
Canada	53	67
Range	50--62	61--77

Far fewer Canadian young people used drugs other than alcohol. For example, 10, 20 and 25 percent of New Brunswick's Grade 7, 9 and 11 students, respectively, reported smoking cigarettes daily, percentages that were similar to those of their counterparts throughout Canada; and 2, 11 and 21 percent of Grade 7, 9 and 11 students in New Brunswick reported having used cannabis at least once a month, percentages virtually identical to the national averages.

B. Knowledge of AIDS

In this section we describe what youth knew about AIDS, their sources of AIDS information and their views of selected sources.

1. Accuracy of AIDS knowledge

Young people in New Brunswick, on average, knew as much about AIDS as did Canadian youth overall (Table 9). Compared with their peers across the country, however, fewer New Brunswick Grade 7s knew that AIDS is incurable or that not all homosexual men carry the AIDS virus, and fewer New Brunswick Grade 9s knew that AIDS can have a long asymptomatic stage (Table 10). Regardless of their knowledge about AIDS, two-thirds of New Brunswick youth, compared to one-half of their Canadian peers, worried about getting AIDS. In spite of these substantial differences related to fear of AIDS, similarly low percentages of New Brunswick and Canadian Grade 11s (18 and 15% respectively) said that this fear was keeping them from engaging in sexual intercourse.

Table 9

Percentage of AIDS Knowledge Items*
to Which Youth Responded Correctly

	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
New Brunswick	65%	75	66
Canada	68	78	67
Range	58--74	70--83	65--71

*Grade 7 = 15 items, Grade 9 = 16 items and Grade 11 = 17 items.

Table 10

Youth Responding Correctly to Selected AIDS Knowledge Items

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
AIDS can be cured if treated early. (False)	New Brunswick	55%	75	82
	Canada	62	75	82
	Range	49--68	59--85	74--92
There are blood tests that show if a person has been infected by the AIDS virus. (True)	New Brunswick	90	91	94
	Canada	89	91	92
	Range	78--93	80--94	87--95
A person can have the AIDS virus for seven or more years without having signs of illness. (True)	New Brunswick	42	50	63
	Canada	44	56	66
	Range	37--59	46--69	58--77
All homosexual men carry the AIDS virus. (False)	New Brunswick	63	73	86
	Canada	68	77	87
	Range	40--76	50--85	73--91
The AIDS virus can be spread from a female to her unborn child during pregnancy. (True)	New Brunswick	64	76	82
	Canada	67	79	84
	Range	59--74	70--84	76--91
The AIDS virus may be spread from a female to a male during sexual intercourse. (True).	New Brunswick	87	89	93
	Canada	90	91	93
	Range	79--94	89--94	92--98
The AIDS virus can be spread through sharing injection drug needles. (True)	New Brunswick	79	89	96
	Canada	83	93	96
	Range	71--93	84--99	92--99

2. Sources of AIDS Information

New Brunswick youth and those in the rest of Canada had received information about AIDS mainly from television, print material (pamphlets, magazines, newspapers and books/journals), school and family members (especially mother). These findings include the first and second chosen sources for each respondent and only the major sources have been included in Table 11. The percentages of New Brunswick Grade 7 and 9 students who had received information about AIDS in school were lower than the Grade 7 and 9 national averages.

Table 11
Youth's Main Sources of Information About AIDS*

Source		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
Television	New Brunswick	59%	60	67
	Canada	60	55	66
	Range	56--71	48--62	60--74
Print material	New Brunswick	38	46	57
	Canada	38	44	57
	Range	32--45	35--54	39--66
School	New Brunswick	20	25	29
	Canada	27	41	31
	Range	16--38	20--51	14--52
Family	New Brunswick	32	21	10
	Canada	32	17	9
	Range	17--36	13--21	4--11

*First and second sources for each respondent have been combined and only the major sources have been included.

There was no clear consensus among Grade 9 and 11 students in New Brunswick about their preferred sources of AIDS information. (Grade 7s did not have the opportunity to indicate their preferred sources.) Grade 9s and 11s preferred to obtain AIDS information from several sources: doctor nurse (37 and 45% respectively, combining first and second choices), print material (27 and 33%), television (30 and 31%), school (29 and 32%) and family (27 and 17%).

Compared with the national results, fewer New Brunswick youth spent class time learning about AIDS over the past two school years (Table 12).

Table 12

**Hours of Class Time Spent by Youth Learning About AIDS
over the Past Two School Years**

Hours		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
0	New Brunswick	45%	41	31
	Canada	39	22	27
	Range	24--54	12--41	17--46
1-2	New Brunswick	31	32	36
	Canada	32	29	31
	Range	23--41	22--44	21--51
3-4	New Brunswick	9	9	15
	Canada	10	15	14
	Range	6--12	9--19	9--23
5 or more	New Brunswick	15	18	19
	Canada	19	30	28
	Range	11--27	12--43	13--39

3. Attitudes toward sources of AIDS information

What were young peoples' attitudes toward government, media and parents as sources of AIDS information? Nearly one-half of New Brunswick's Grade 7, 9 and 11 students, compared with about one-third of those in Canada generally, reported being confused by the media. Nevertheless, more New Brunswick Grade 11s trusted the media as sources of AIDS information (Table 13). And, regardless of age, higher percentages of New Brunswick youth than in Canada generally believed many parents needed more information about AIDS.

Table 13

Youth Agreeing with Items About Selected Sources of AIDS Information

Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
Many parents do not know enough about AIDS.	New Brunswick	60%	70	81
	Canada	54	59	72
	Range	40--70	50--77	62--85
I trust what the government says about AIDS.	New Brunswick	47	53	54
	Canada	47	51	51
	Range	38--54	47--58	39--68
I trust what television, radio and newspapers say about AIDS.	New Brunswick	48	52	61
	Canada	45	49	55
	Range	34--57	41--64	46--74

C. Knowledge of STDs

In this section we describe what youth knew about STDs and the sources from which they learned about these diseases.

1. Accuracy of STD knowledge

Grade 9s and 11s in New Brunswick, on average, possessed less accurate information about STDs than their Canadian counterparts (Table 14). Specifically, they were among the least informed youth in Canada about being able to catch STDs more than once, birth control pills not protecting a female from STDs, the serious consequences of undetected chlamydia and the risk of contracting genital herpes from oral sex (Table 15). Fewer New Brunswick Grade 9s (51%) compared with the national sample (61%) believed their chances of catching a STD were low.

Table 14

Percentage of STD Knowledge Items* to Which Youth Responded Correctly

	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
New Brunswick	40%	47	51
Canada	42	52	56
Range	31--48	43--57	50--60

*Grade 7 = 5 items, Grade 9 = 7 items and Grade 11 = 11 items.

Table 15

Youth Responding Correctly to Selected STD Knowledge Items

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
Many people with STDs will not have signs of illness. (True)	New Brunswick	43%	57	43
	Canada	39	54	41
	Range	20--65	36--78	27--65
If a person has had a STD, he or she cannot catch it again. (False)	New Brunswick	35	47	65
	Canada	39	58	76
	Range	33--42	47--64	65--84
Taking birth control pills will protect a female from STDs. (False)	New Brunswick	*	63	81
	Canada	*	73	86
	Range	*	62--78	77--90
Although chlamydia is the most common STD, it does not lead to serious problems. (False)	New Brunswick	*	16	12
	Canada	*	21	21
	Range	*	16--25	12--30
A person can get genital herpes from oral sex. (True)	New Brunswick	*	*	25
	Canada	*	*	33
	Range	*	*	25--45

*The questionnaire designed for this grade did not include this item.

2. Sources of STD information

Grade 7s, 9s and 11s in New Brunswick and Canada stated that they obtained their information about STDs mainly from print material, school, television and family members (Table 16). Fewer young people in New Brunswick than in Canada generally gained their information about STDs from school, but more of the province's Grade 9 and 11 students received such information from their families and more of the Grade 9s learned about STDs from television.

Table 16
Youth's Main Sources of Information About STDs*

Source		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
Television	New Brunswick	39%	34	33
	Canada	40	29	29
	Range	33--45	21--37	15--34
Print material	New Brunswick	36	42	49
	Canada	38	43	51
	Range	30--48	35--56	47--65
School	New Brunswick	23	33	41
	Canada	28	49	49
	Range	17--45	17--59	25--58
Family	New Brunswick	30	24	18
	Canada	30	19	13
	Range	17--33	11--24	4--18

*First and second sources for each respondent have been combined and only the major sources have been included.

There was little agreement among New Brunswick Grade 9s and 11s about where they preferred to learn about STDs: doctor/nurse (38 and 48%), print material (28 and 33%), school (29 and 29%), family (29 and 20%), and television (23 and 23%).

D. Attitudes

Many people working in the AIDS field believe that the response to the AIDS epidemic would be more constructive if the views of society were less negative toward people with AIDS and HIV infection and toward condom use. In this section, we examine the attitudes of young Canadians toward people with AIDS or HIV infection, homosexuality, condoms and sexual permissiveness.

1. People who have the AIDS virus

To judge young people's attitudes toward people who have AIDS or HIV infection, we developed eight items to indicate their opinions about what such people should be allowed to do and what should be required of them. As shown in Table 17, similar percentages of New Brunswick and Canadian youth believed that people who have the AIDS virus should be allowed to attend school, serve the public and work in hospitals. The majority of Canadian youth would restrict the rights of HIV-infected people to have contact with the public, and about one-fifth of them would go so far as to quarantine people who have AIDS. Fourteen percent of New Brunswick's Grade 11s, compared with 19 percent of their Canadian counterparts, agreed that people with AIDS should be quarantined.

Table 17

Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About People Who Have the AIDS Virus

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
People who have the AIDS virus should be allowed to				
. attend regular school classes.	New Brunswick	57%	58	60
	Canada	61	58	55
	Range	54--67	53--66	49--65
. serve the public as waiters, chefs and hair stylists.	New Brunswick	33	35	28
	Canada	36	35	25
	Range	29--42	30--39	20--33
. work in hospitals.	New Brunswick	13	10	11
	Canada	14	12	11
	Range	10--17	9--18	8--14

2. Homosexuality

Youth responded to four attitude items related to homosexuality; their responses to two of the items are presented in Table 18. Compared with Canadian Grade 11s, fewer of those in New Brunswick viewed homosexuality as wrong; otherwise, results from New Brunswick and Canada generally were similar.

Table 18

Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About Homosexuality

Selected Items		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
Homosexuality is wrong.	New Brunswick	46%	44	31
	Canada	45	42	38
	Range	27--57	26--55	20--49
Homosexuals should be allowed to be teachers.	New Brunswick	31	35	42
	Canada	33	39	41
	Range	20--43	28--49	30--55

3. Condoms

The proportions of New Brunswick Grade 11 students who would be embarrassed to buy condoms was higher than the Canadian average (Table 19). They were similar to other Grade 11s in Canada in believing that carrying a condom signifies a willingness to have sex.

Table 19

Youth Agreeing with Selected Items About Condoms

Selected Items		Grade 11
I would be embarrassed to buy condoms.	New Brunswick	48%
	Canada	40
	Range	34--53
If you carry a condom, people will think you are willing to have sex.	New Brunswick	57
	Canada	53
	Range	45--66

4. Sexual permissiveness

The percentages of Grade 7, 9 and 11 students in New Brunswick and Canada who agreed with "It is alright for two people to have sex before marriage if they are in love" were nearly identical: Grade 7, 62 compared with 62 percent; Grade 9, 71 compared with 70 percent; and Grade 11, 78 compared with 76 percent. Canadian youth generally accept premarital sex within a loving relationship.

E. Sexual Activity

AIDS is the most devastating disease that is spread primarily through unprotected vaginal and anal intercourse; chlamydia, gonorrhea and genital herpes are among other critical diseases spread through these types of contacts. Abstinence from sexual intercourse (anal and vaginal) is the surest way to avoid all STDs. There are sexual activities that do not contribute to the spread of infectious organisms: those during which semen, vaginal secretions and blood are not

contacted. Using a condom every time one engages in sexual intercourse with a partner who may not be risk-free is recommended practice.

In this section we discuss the variety and frequency of sexual activity engaged in by Canadian youth, the number of partners with whom Grade 11 students have had sexual (vaginal) intercourse and the sources from which youth learn about sex and birth control.

1. Frequency of sexual activity

The majority of Canadian Grade 7s had engaged in some preliminary sexual activity. Compared with the national results, more New Brunswick Grade 7s had at least once held hands (80 to 74%), hugged (73 to 68%) and kissed (69 to 63%).

By Grade 9, 26 percent of Canadian and 31 percent of New Brunswick youth had had sexual intercourse at least once (Table 20). In the case of other sexual activities we found similar differences between the provincial and national percentages. For example, more New Brunswick Grade 9s than their Canadian peers had at least once engaged in deep kissing and petting below the waist, and more of them had often engaged in deep kissing.

Table 20
Frequency of Grade 9 Youth's Sexual Activity

Sexual Activities		Never	Once	Few Times	Often
Deep kissing	New Brunswick	19%	7	32	42
	Canada	27	9	30	34
	Range	19--34	6--12	28--35	26--43
Petting above the waist	New Brunswick	29	10	35	26
	Canada	33	11	35	22
	Range	25--40	8--13	33--42	16--29
Petting below the waist	New Brunswick	37	11	32	21
	Canada	43	11	29	17
	Range	35--50	9--15	24--35	11--21
Sexual intercourse	New Brunswick	69	9	14	7
	Canada	74	8	11	6
	Range	58--78	7--12	8--26	4--12

Older youth were more sexually active as is illustrated by the data in Table 21. About three-quarters of the Grade 11 students had petted below the waist, over one-half had slept with someone of the opposite sex without having sexual intercourse and nearly one-half had had sexual intercourse at least once. For most sexual activities, New Brunswick Grade 11s involvement was different from that of their Canadian peers: more had often engaged in deep kissing, petting above and below the waist and sexual intercourse.

Table 21

Frequency of Grade 11 Youth's Sexual Activity

Sexual Activities		Never	Once	Few Times	Often
Deep kissing	New Brunswick	10	3	27	60
	Canada	16	5	26	53
	Range	9--22	3--7	23--33	45--61
Petting above the waist	New Brunswick	13	5	37	45
	Canada	19	7	34	40
	Range	13--27	5--9	32--43	32--46
Petting below the waist	New Brunswick	21	7	35	38
	Canada	26	8	34	32
	Range	19--33	6--10	29--40	26--38
Sleeping together without having sexual intercourse	New Brunswick	43	14	30	13
	Canada	45	14	28	13
	Range	32--54	11--16	22--42	8--15
Sexual intercourse	New Brunswick	49	7	21	23
	Canada	53	8	21	18
	Range	35--56	6--11	19--29	17--25

2. Number of sexual partners

Forty-seven percent of the Grade 11s in Canada overall and 51 percent of those in New Brunswick reported having had sexual intercourse at least once. Of those New Brunswick Grade 11s who had had sexual intercourse, 57 percent had had two or more sexual partners (Table 22).

Table 22

**Number of Partners with Whom Youth
Have Had Sexual Intercourse**

Partners		Grade 11
1	New Brunswick	43%
	Canada	40
2-5	New Brunswick	39
	Canada	43
6 or more	New Brunswick	18
	Canada	17

3. Sources of information about sex and birth control

Canadian youth had obtained most of their information about sex from the five sources listed in Table 23. In New Brunswick, compared with other young Canadians, more Grade 7s learned about sex from friends, fewer Grade 7, 9 and 11 students mentioned school as a source of sex information, and more Grade 9s learned about sex from television.

Table 23

Youth's Main Sources of Information About Sex*

Sources		Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11
Family	New Brunswick	49%	42	38
	Canada	49	40	34
	Range	29--55	28--42	27--38
Friends	New Brunswick	27	32	38
	Canada	22	31	38
	Range	15--32	22--40	30--45
School	New Brunswick	27	21	24
	Canada	34	36	29
	Range	19--42	16--40	15--34
Print Materials	New Brunswick	23	26	26
	Canada	23	24	25
	Range	20--28	22--32	21--33
Television	New Brunswick	32	29	25
	Canada	30	24	23
	Range	25--40	19--31	19--28

*First and second sources for each respondent have been combined and only the major sources have been included.

Two trends are evident in these data. Older students, compared with younger ones, were less reliant on family and more reliant on friends for information about sex. And, in provinces/territories where family and school were the main sources, friends was usually the least often mentioned of the five major sources of sex information.

Grade 9s and 11s in New Brunswick stated a preference for learning about sex from their families (48 and 50% respectively). There was less support for other preferred sources: friends (21 and 20%), school (22 and 19%), doctor/nurse (17 and 25%), print material (21 and 19%) and television (17 and 14%).

Family, friends, school, print material and television were also youth's main and preferred sources of information about birth control, with family being the source most preferred by New Brunswick Grade 9s and 11s (41 and 41%).

F. Summary

We conclude this part of the report by summarizing the New Brunswick findings about AIDS, other STDs and sexuality.

Compared with their counterparts across Canada, New Brunswick youth

- knew as much about AIDS and less about other STDs;
- had received less information about AIDS from school and more from television;
- had received less information about STDs from school and more from family;
- expressed similar attitudes toward people with AIDS and HIV infection;
- were less likely, at the Grade 11 level, to view homosexuality as wrong;
- were similarly approving of premarital sex;
- were more likely to be embarrassed to buy condoms;
- were more sexually active; and
- had received less information about sex from school and more from friends and television.

PART III

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The dilemma for provincial territorial educators and health promoters made clear by the **Canada Youth and AIDS Study** is that in spite of their knowledge about AIDS Canadian youth continue to behave in ways that put them at risk. The explanation for this seems to lie in part with the willingness of adolescents to engage in a variety of potentially dangerous activities, such as fad dieting, drinking and driving and sexual experimentation. Probably more important is the belief, prevalent among youth, that their chances of being infected by HIV are low regardless of their personal behaviours. This belief is reinforced by the near absence of documented cases of AIDS in their age group, the low number of adult cases in most Canadian provinces and territories, and the low percentage of cases reported among heterosexual, non-drug-using Canadians. Young people have not internalized the risk that AIDS poses to their future well-being, a risk that is masked by the undetermined extent of HIV infection among Canadians in general and youth in particular.

Knowledge about AIDS also has not influenced in positive ways the attitudes of youth toward people with AIDS or HIV infection. This is in large part explained by widely held negative views about homosexuality and the continued association of HIV infection and AIDS with that sexual orientation.

It also appears that STD education has been largely ineffective. Youth are distressingly uninformed about the serious consequences of undetected STDs other than AIDS, have unrealistic beliefs about their chances of becoming infected and have not been motivated to avoid or change behaviours that could result in infection.

Because the approach taken thus far to education about AIDS and other STDs has not resulted in behaviour change, we recommend there be developed, pilot-tested and evaluated programs that include

- information that is current, complete, clear, accurate and explicit;
- personal contact for youth with HIV-infected people and/or those affected by AIDS;
- a clear identification of the probability of becoming infected with HIV as a result of engaging in low- to high-risk behaviours;
- a range of sexual behaviour options including but not limited to abstinence;
- personal skill development, including training in responsible decision making and interpersonal communication; and
- approaches that engender compassion for people with AIDS or HIV infection and tolerance for homosexuality.

Only those strategies that can be demonstrated to help youth maintain or initiate desired behaviours should be widely implemented.

Young Canadians are anxious about AIDS and eager for more information. Now is the time for dynamic education programs to help them develop appropriate attitudes and adopt safer behaviours with respect to AIDS and other STDs.